

MEMORANDUM

To: Housing Needs Study Committee
Town of Newington

From: Glenn Chalder, AICP

Date: June 8, 2020

Subject: **Kickoff Meeting Materials – June 15**
Newington Housing Study

Greetings!

I am looking forward to working with the Housing Needs Study Committee and the Town of Newington to investigate and evaluate housing needs and prepare a housing plan. This memorandum organizes some materials to help guide the discussion at the “kickoff meeting” on June 15, 2020.

1. 2006-08 Housing Study Committee

In November 2006, the Town Council established a Housing Study Committee to determine the need for, and potential solutions to, providing affordable, age-restricted housing in Newington with a preference for Newington seniors. The Committee was to be comprised of three members from the Newington Town Council and two from the public. The Committee was asked to recommend a long-term senior housing strategic plan to the Newington Town Council.

In December 2006 (one month later), the Town Council identified the “New Meadow site” as a feasible location of a component of the strategic plan and selected the New Samaritan Corporation as the Town's preferred developer for the second phase of New Meadow Property. The Affordable Age-Restricted Housing Study Committee was asked to review the parameters of the proposed development and include the New Meadow location, as well as other viable properties, in its comprehensive recommendations to the Town Council for final approval.

The Housing Study Committee met eight times during 2007 and issued the following findings and recommendations to the Town Council in February 2008:

Findings

- There are between 320 to 535 elderly (over 65 years old) households in Newington who meet low income criteria for affordable housing as defined in Section 8-30g C.G.S.
- There are very few long-term sites suitable for elderly housing and only one site that is available now that meets ownership, infrastructure and locational qualities conducive for age restricted housing.
- There are limited funding sources for the construction of affordable age restricted housing.
- The HUD 202 program is the best program because it provides both construction funding and guaranteed payment of operating expenses.
- Development of the Town owned New Meadow property (Parcel E) and 90 Welles Drive (former Board of Education Administrative Building) could provide 30 to 36 affordable age restricted apartments and 50 to 60 new additional parking spaces for the Senior Center and Newington Housing Authority uses.
- The Town Council could seek a 2008 Small Cities grant for funds to rehabilitate the existing 26 Newington Housing Authority elderly apartments, to build the additional parking spaces and demolish 90 Welles Drive building and prepare the north side of the site for senior housing.

Recommendations

- There exists a need for affordable housing in Newington to accommodate the growing number of elderly households;
- The Committee believes that the New Meadow property is the best and only available location for senior housing and its development furthers the Town's long standing commitment to use this land for affordable age restricted housing.
- A partnership with the New Samaritan Corporation is the best opportunity for meeting some of the Town's low income age restricted housing needs.
- The Committee recommends to the Council that the Town Manager be authorized to enter into a ground lease option with the New Samaritan Corporation.

Do you have any questions about the 2006-08 Housing Study Committee?

2. 2014-15 Housing Needs Study Committee

In May 2014, the Town Council established a Housing Needs Study Committee (NHNSC) comprised of five members to perform a study regarding housing needs in Newington:

- two Town Council representatives,
- one Town Plan and Zoning Commission representative,
- one public member of the Newington Senior and Disabled Center, and
- one member of the Interfaith Community

The Committee worked with Dr. John Mitrano and his Community Research Methods class from Central Connecticut State University. The survey was mailed out to 13,150 households and 3,228 responses were received (25% response rate). While a summary report is attached hereto, the following findings were specifically identified by CCSU:

- 58% of seniors (age 60 and older) said they intend to stay in their current residence and this speaks to the need for trained aides and other ways to make it possible for seniors to continue to live independently.
- 65% of seniors expressed an interest in senior housing (the Committee felt it safe to assume that this demand far exceeds current supply).
- 80% of Newington seniors expected to pay less than \$1,250 per month for housing in the future (but this assumes no support services since an assisted living unit can cost \$5,289 per month).
- 10% of seniors expressed a high interest in living in “subsidized or government assisted housing” (the Committee felt it safe to assume that this demand far exceeds current supply).

In addition to the mail survey, several focus groups were conducted.

- Younger residents (aged 18-29) felt that Newington:
 - presented the opportunity for a quality public education;
 - provided a safe, clean, and quiet living environment;
 - maintained separation between commercial and residential areas, and
 - did not provide a lot of rental units they believed were affordable for people their age.
- Unfortunately, no residents aged 30-54 showed up to participate in that focus group.
- Older residents (aged 55 and older and many long-time residents) felt that Newington:
 - offered a quiet and safe living environment;
 - had a heightened sense of community,
 - provided the opportunity to be involved with the senior center, and
 - had a serious shortage of senior housing for people with fixed incomes or modest financial means (waiting lists, lack of preference to local residents, etc.).

Do you have any questions about the 2014-15 Housing Needs Study Committee?

3. Statutory Requirement For Housing Plan

In 2017, the Connecticut legislature adopted Public Act 17-170 which established a statutory requirement for each municipality to adopt an “affordable housing plan” and update it every five years. The target date for such a plan would be July 24, 2022.

Sec. 8-30j. Affordable housing plan. Hearing and adoption. Amendments. Filing requirement.

(a) At least once every five years, each municipality shall prepare or amend and adopt an affordable housing plan for the municipality. Such plan shall specify how the municipality intends to increase the number of affordable housing developments in the municipality.

(b) The municipality may hold public informational meetings or organize other activities to inform residents about the process of preparing the plan. If the municipality holds a public hearing, at least thirty-five days prior to the public hearing on the adoption, the municipality shall file in the office of the town clerk of such municipality a copy of such draft plan or any amendments to the plan, and if applicable, post such draft plan on the Internet web site of the municipality. After adoption of the plan, the municipality shall file the final plan in the office of the town clerk of such municipality and, if applicable, post the plan on the Internet web site of the municipality.

(c) Following adoption, the municipality shall regularly review and maintain such plan. The municipality may adopt such geographical, functional or other amendments to the plan or parts of the plan, in accordance with the provisions of this section, as it deems necessary. If the municipality fails to amend such plan every five years, the chief elected official of the municipality shall submit a letter to the Commissioner of Housing that explains why such plan was not amended.

Do you have any questions about the requirement for a housing plan?

4. Proposed Approach

In early May, the Town selected Planimetrics (a Connecticut-based land use consulting firm) to assist with the process of helping the Town prepare a Housing Plan. The Scope of Work is summarized below.

1. Kickoff / Scoping Review – <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Introductory meeting with Staff (collect data)b. Introductory meeting with HNSC to confirm expectations, goals/objectives, and schedule (1 meeting)
2. Prepare Baseline Information Report (Planimetrics) - <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Basic demographic overview (existing / future age composition, income, race, etc.).b. Basic housing supply / demand overview<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing types – inventory / gap / locations• Housing price - inventory / gap / locations• Existing Sec. 8-30g affordable housing, State-licensed group homes and Veterans Administration housing• Existing naturally occurring affordable housing (including short term rentals on the Berlin Turnpike or elsewhere)c. Regulatory overview (where housing options currently permitted / how regulations may encourage/discourage housing choice, regulatory barriers, etc.)
3. Prepare Assessment Report (Planimetrics) - <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Restate overall goals / objectives / vision (from kick-off meeting)b. Summarize issues identified from baseline information researchc. Suggest possible strategies to address goals / objectives / vision / issues<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the housing needs?• How many units? (overall, short-term moratorium, long-term moratorium, etc.)• Where might units be located / accommodated based on factors relevant to housing diversity?• What types of units could be located / accommodated? (visual gallery of existing / possible?)
4. Review Meeting With HNSC - <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Review / discuss baseline information reportb. Review / discuss / refine assessment report

<p>5. Prepare Preliminary Strategies Report (Planimetrics) -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Summarize plan purpose and overall goals / objectives / vision b. Summarize baseline information c. Summarize assessment d. Propose strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What policies / action steps are needed to accomplish goals / objectives • Who will be responsible for accomplishing policies / action steps • When should action steps be completed
<p>6. Review Meeting With HNSC -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review / refine preliminary strategies report
<p>7. Refine Preliminary Strategies Report to Reflect HNSC Feedback (Planimetrics)</p>
<p>8. Community Meetings To Get Input / Feedback (up to two meetings) -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Meeting preparations / publicity b. Meeting topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing choice / diversity • Housing types / locations • Types of housing might community consider for addressing housing needs
<p>9. Review Meeting With HNSC -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review community input b. Review / refine preliminary strategies report c. HNSC “endorse” report
<p>10. Finalize Affordable Housing Plan (Planimetrics) -</p>

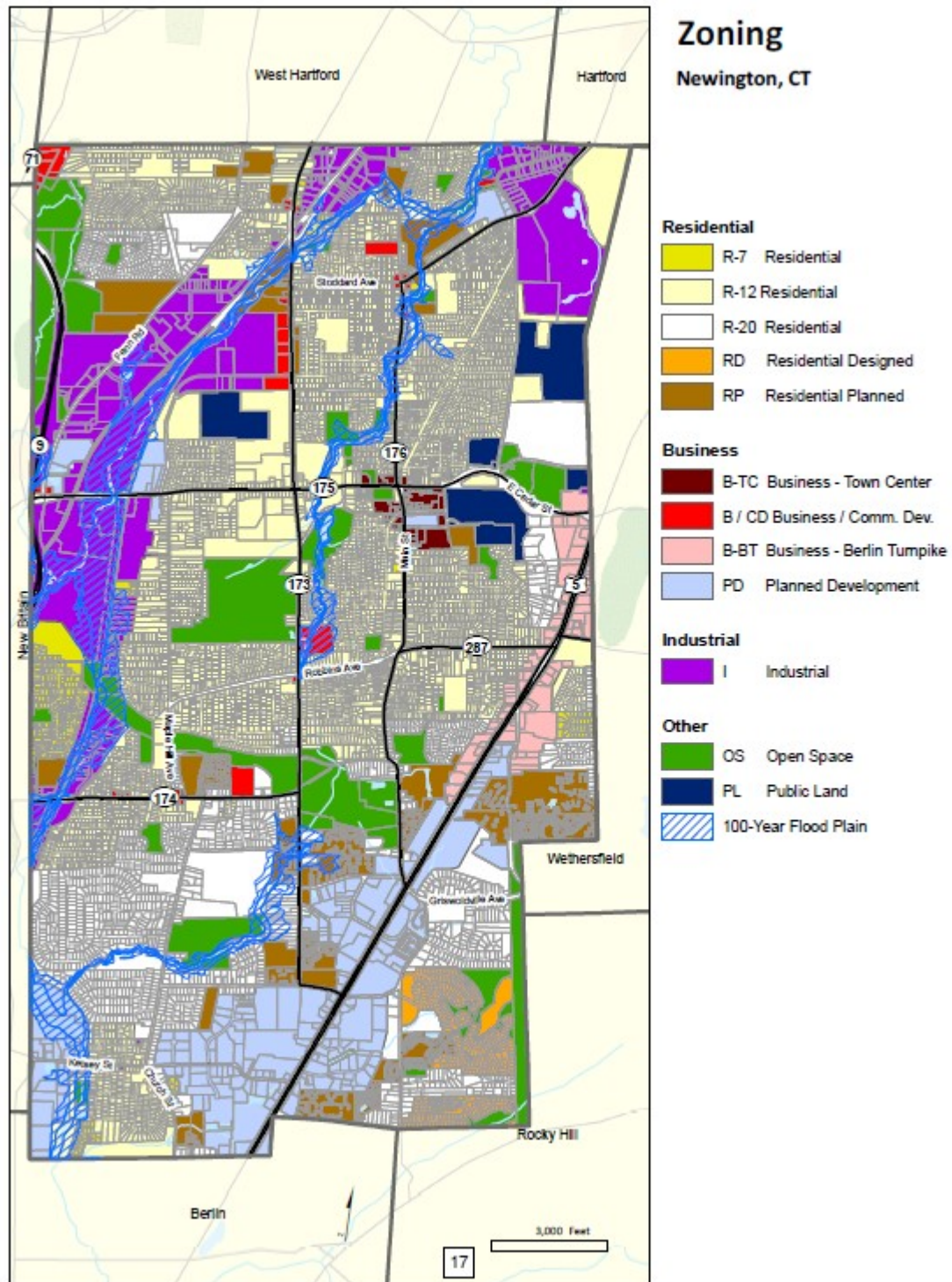
At this time, it is anticipated work will commence in May and will proceed as shown below. The schedule has been configured to avoid a community meeting in the summer months.

Scope Item	May	June	July	August	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
1. Kickoff / Scoping Review							
2. Prepare Baseline Information Report							
3. Prepare Assessment Report							
4. Review Meeting With HNSC -							
5. Prepare Preliminary Strategies Report							
6. Review Meeting With HNSC							
7. Refine Preliminary Strategies Report							
8. Community Meetings							
9. Review Meeting With HNSC							
10. Finalize Affordable Housing Plan							

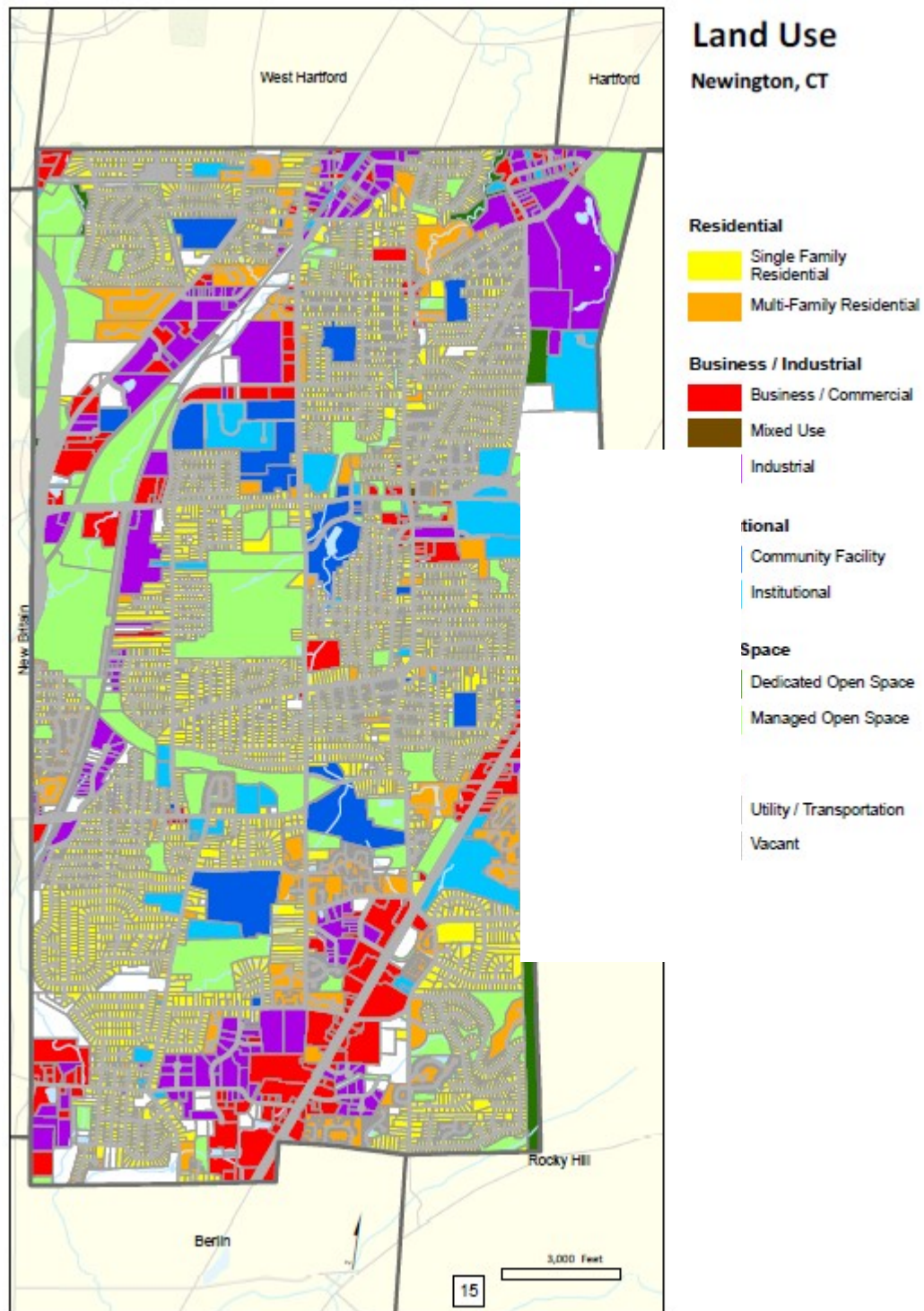
Do you have any questions about the overall scope of work or the process or the schedule?

5. Related Information

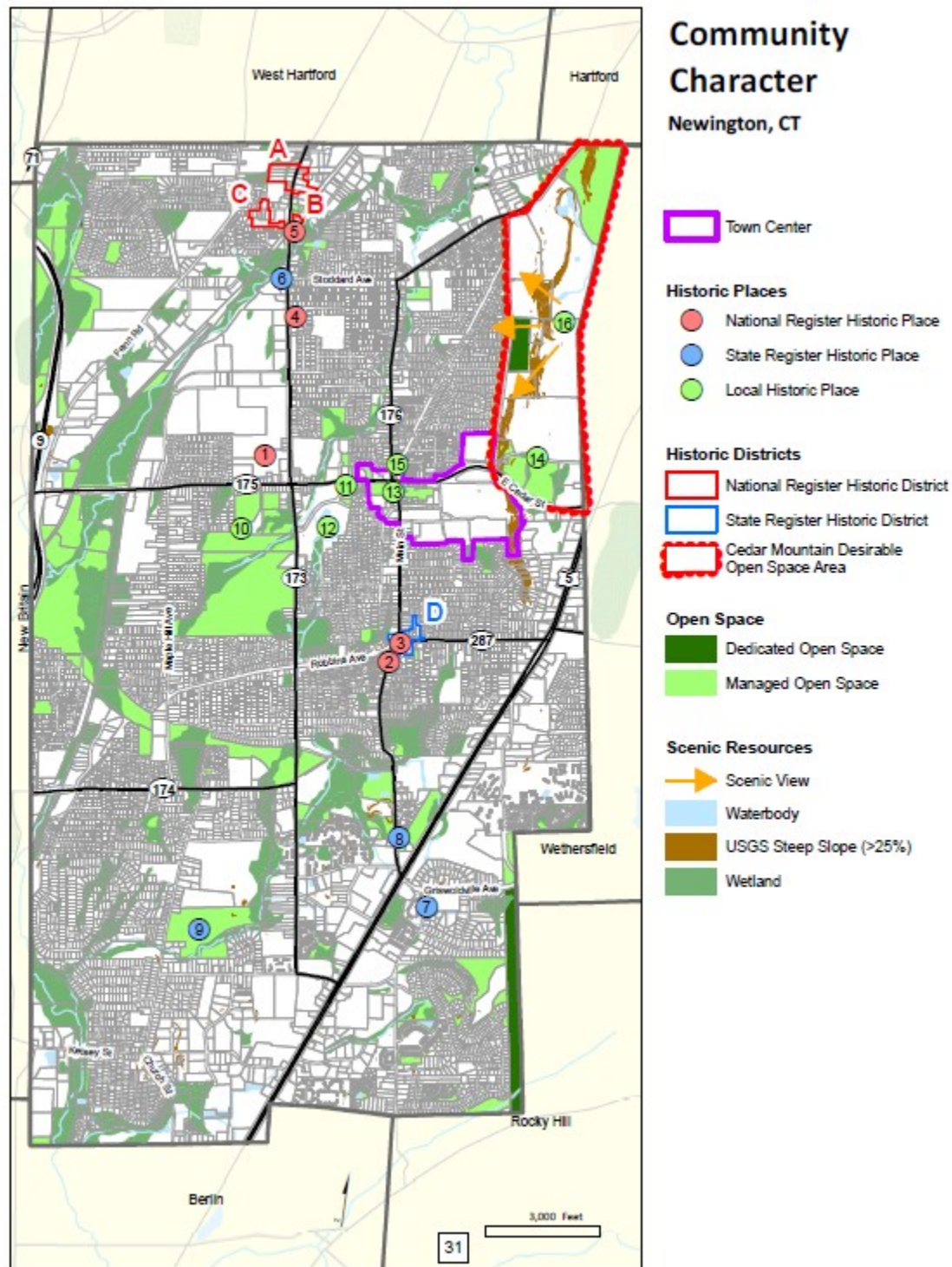
2020 Zoning Map



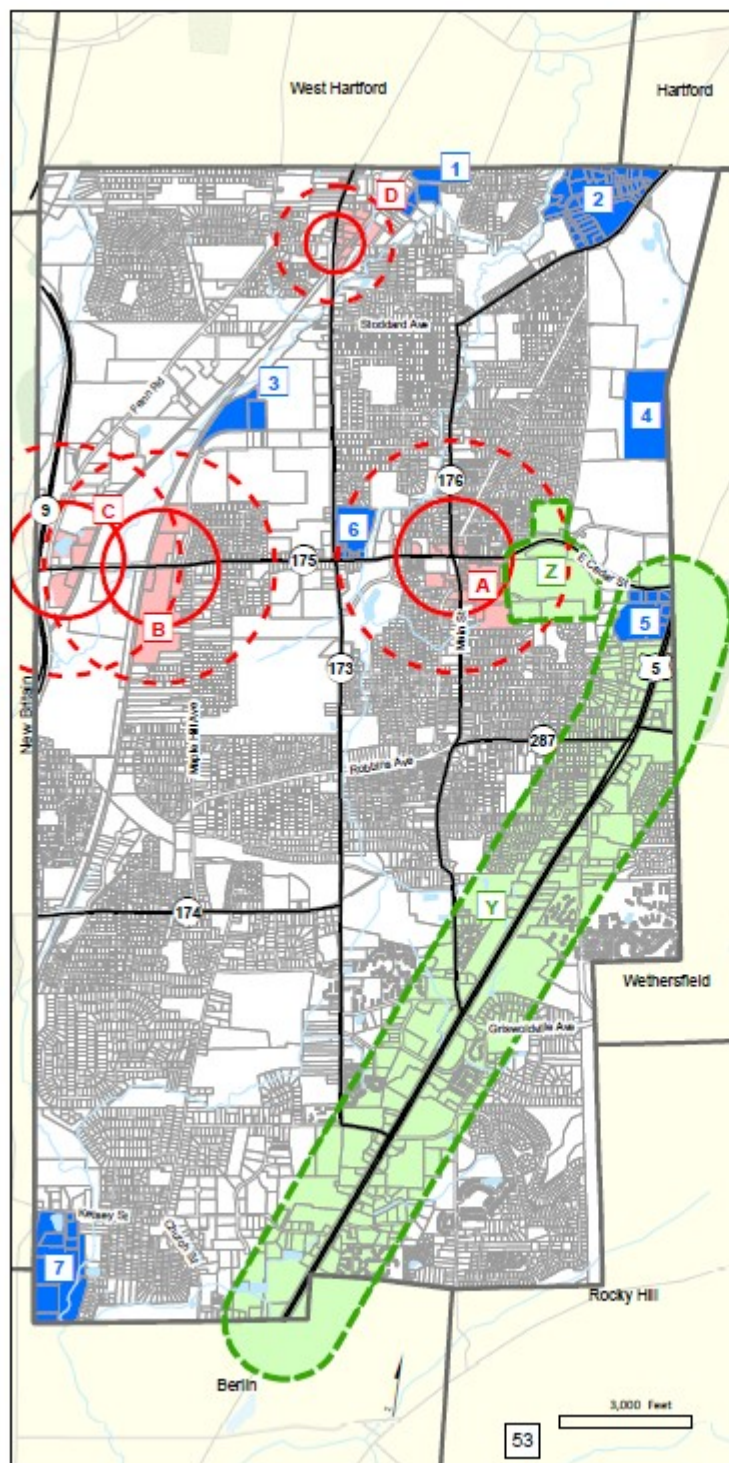
2020 Land Use



2020 DRAFT Plan of Conservation and Development – Character / Resources



2020 DRAFT Plan of Conservation and Development – Opportunity Sites



Opportunity Sites

Newington, CT

Codes:

B = Business
I = Industrial
M = Mixed Use
O = Office
P = Public / Private Institution
R = Residential
T = Transitions

Key Opportunity Area

(Generally mixed use, pedestrian-friendly, and transit oriented)

Core Area / Walk Radius

Fringe Area / Walk Radius

A = Town Center (M)

B = Future Train Station (M)

C = Cedar Street Fastrak Station (M)

D = Newington Junction (M)

Special Opportunity Area

Y = Berlin Turnpike (B/I/O/P)

Z = Town Center East (B/M/O/P/R)

Opportunity Site

1 = Day Street (B/I/M/R)

2 = North Mountain Road (I/O)

3 = Alumni Road (B/I/O/P)

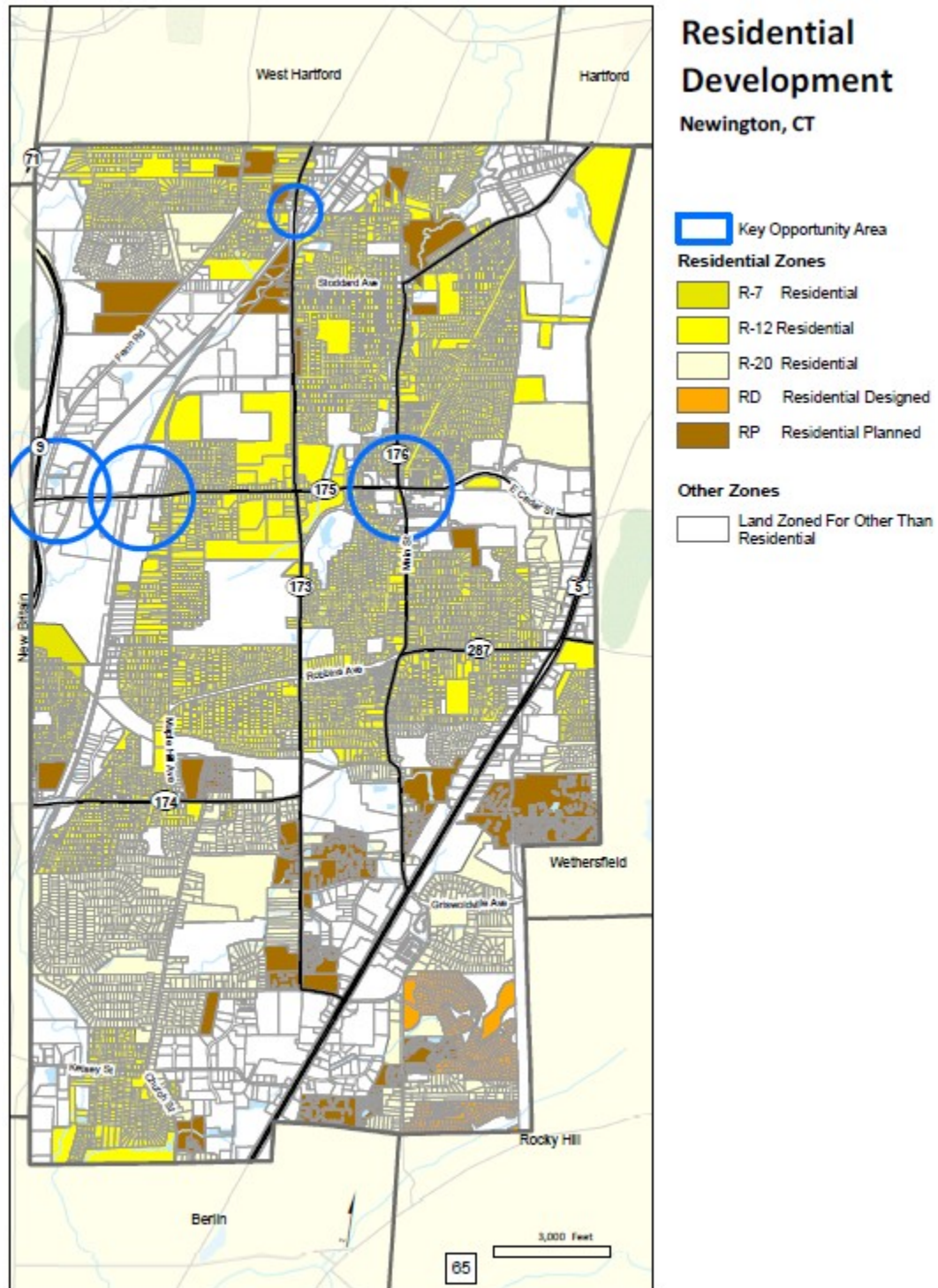
4 = Cedarcrest Hospital (O/P/R)

5 = East Cedar Street (B/O/R)

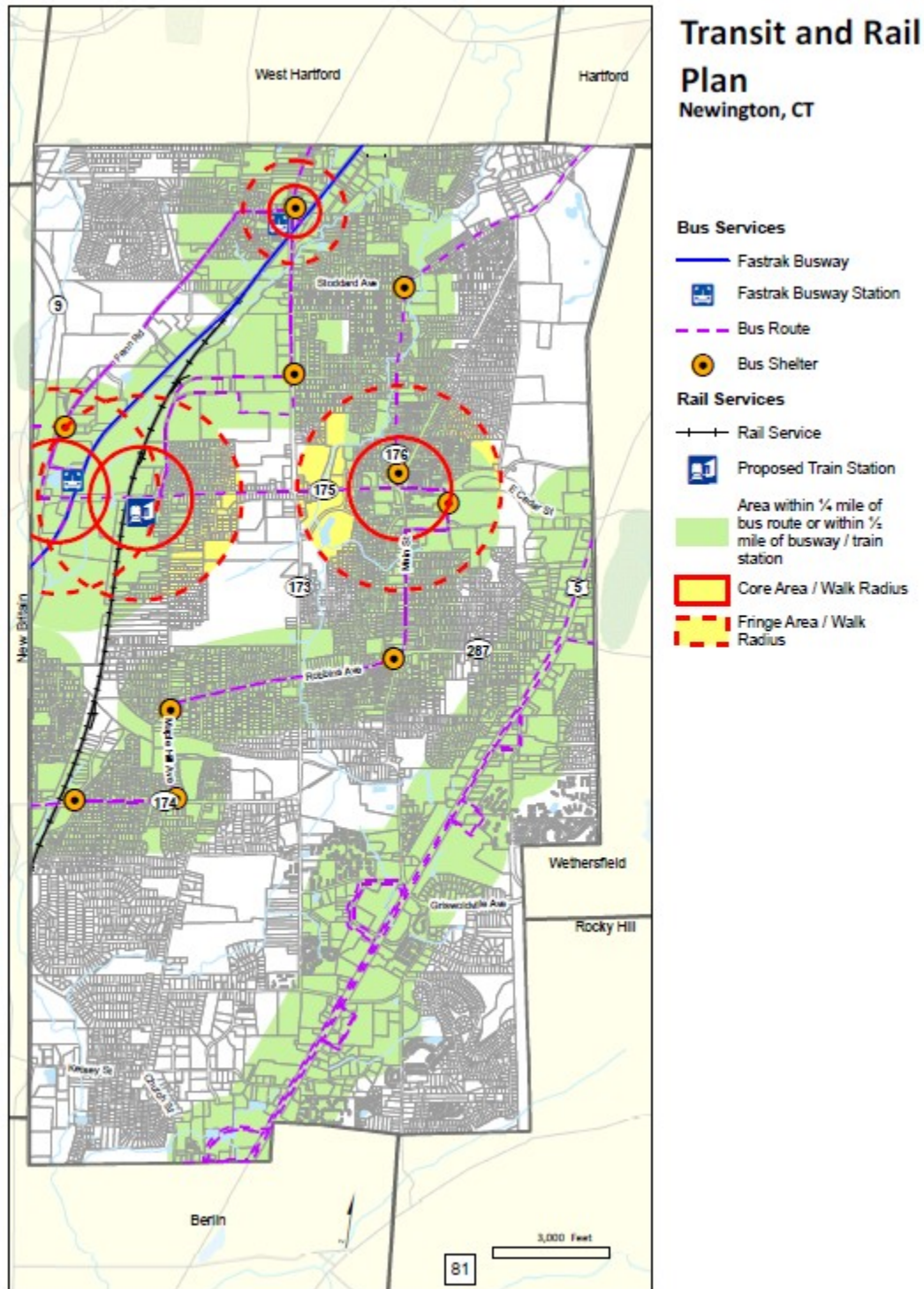
6 = Willard Avenue (O/P/R)

7 = Kelsey Street (B/O/I)

2020 DRAFT Plan of Conservation and Development – Residential Development



2020 DRAFT Plan of Conservation and Development – Transit / Rail



2020 DRAFT Plan of Conservation and Development – Utility Infrastructure

